

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SOFIA 00338 270208Z

63

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 /020 W
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R 251151Z FEB 75
FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA
TO USDOC WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9251

UNCLAS SOFIA 0338

E.O. 11652: NA
NQTAGYJC IJEXPW BU
SUBJECT: PLOVDIV FAIR: POTATO PEELE
IMM USDOC FOR BEWT/TP, STATE FOR EUR/EE

REF: STATE 36669

1. BULGARIANS HAVE INDICATED INTEREST "IN PRINCIPLE" IN VAN MARK EQUIPMENT AS DESCRIBED REFTEL. STATE ENTERPRISE MACHINO-IMPORT IS UNWILLING TO MAKE ANY JUDGEMENTS IN ABSENCE OF INFORMATION INCLUDING BROCHURES AND EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS, WHICH THEY ARE ANXIOUS TO SEE. SUGGEST THESE BE MAILED TO US DIRECT FROM FIRM BY INTERNATIONAL AIRMAIL.

2. ACCORDING TO STATISTICS AVAILABLE, BULGARIAN POTATO PRODUCTION IN METRIC TONS WAS 404 THOUSAND IN 1971, 382 THOUSAND IN 1972, AND 324 THOUSAND IN 1973. 296 THOUSAND DECARES OF POTATOES WERE GROWN IN 1972. ALSO IN 1972 93 THOUSAND TONS OF POTATOES WERE SOLD RETAIL, AND THE RATION BETWEEN RETAIL SALES AND SALES TO CATERING ESTABLISHMENTS WAS 75:25. PRELIMINARY INFORMATION DOES NOT INDICATE PURPOSES FOR WHICH REMAINING PRODUCTION IS USED.

3. WHILE THERE IS NO WAY OF RAPIDLY OBTAINING SUCH INFORMATION FROM BULGARIAN SOURCES, IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT PRODUCTION IS LARGE ENOUGH FOR BULGARIA TO CONTEMPLATE THE PURCHASE OF THE LARGEST PEELERS, PARTICULARLY GIVEN THE INCREASED CONCENTRATION AND SPECIALIZATION OF THE BULGARIAN
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AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY. HOWEVER, WHILE WE HAVE NO WAY OF

KNOWING FOR CERTAIN WHETHER POTATOES ARE CURRENTLY BEING
SHIPPED PROCESSED OR UNPROCESSED, LOCAL CONTACTS HAVE
IMPRESSION THAT MOST ARE SHIPPED UNPROCESSED.
HERZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SOFIA00338
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750068-0763
From: SOFIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750214/aaaaamrh.tel
Line Count: 65
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 36669
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 MAY 2003 by SilvaL0>; APPROVED <14 JAN 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PLOVDIV FAIR: POTATO PEELE IMM USDOC FOR BEWT/TP, STATE FOR EUR/EE
TAGS: BEXP, BU
To: COM
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006